

# Hillandale

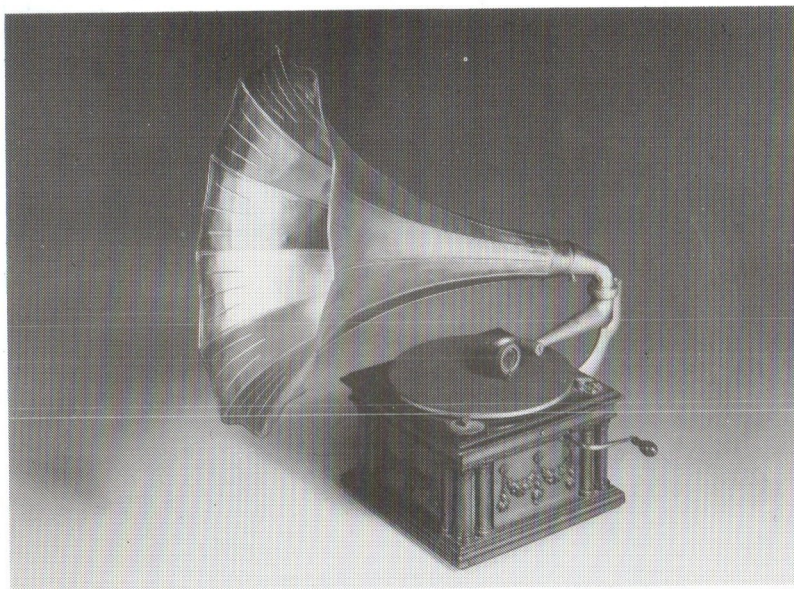
## News

No 218 October 1997



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# Hillandale News

The Official Journal of The City of London Phonograph and Gramophone Society Limited, Co. Reg. No. 3124250

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The Society was founded in 1919

**Patrons:** Oliver Berliner and Kathleen Darby



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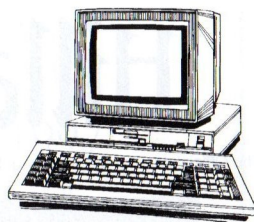
**Issue Number 218, October 1997**

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**Front cover illustration:** The Hon. Noel Pemberton Billing. (See Frank Andrews article  
World Record Ltd. and Pemberton Billing's other Ventures on page 364.)

## EDITOR'S DESK



### Long Playing Records

The vinyl 33 $\frac{1}{3}$  rpm long playing record has been with us for 50 years now. It was in 1947 that the American Columbia company launched the format commercially. It was not long before it replaced the 78rpm record and became the standard music carrier. With the launch of CD worldwide in 1983 the sales LP declined and have now virtually disappeared, except in specialist niche markets. The LP is now part of the history of recording and I think it is time, now, to have occasional articles on the LP and LP record players appearing in our pages. I'm sure many of our members have collections of LPs and record players.

### London Venue

The Bloomsbury Central Baptist Church in Shaftesbury Avenue, London, in whose halls we hold our monthly meetings, will be undergoing a major refurbishment next year. As a result the Society is having to find alternative premises for our meetings. All being well we shall have the arrangements printed in the December issue of the magazine.

### October Meeting

After the AGM on 21st October 1991 will be Colin Johnson will present his programme *If Music be the Food...* Colin will have lots of music for us enjoy. Do come along for a great evening of nostalgia and relaxation.

### November Meeting

Richard Nicholson will be talking on artists who have recorded under pseudonyms. This will be a chance for many to discover the true identities of those many anonymous performers. All are welcome.

Please note that material intended for inclusion in *Hillandale News* must reach the Editor not later than **six weeks before the first day of the month of issue.**

Hence the deadline for the **December 1997** issue will be **15th October 1997.**

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Views expressed in this magazine do not necessarily reflect those of the Editor.



# LONGER-PLAYING RECORDS

by Paul Collenette

Douglas Lorimer's article in *Hillandale News* No.215 on the history of long-playing records was most interesting; it caused me to get out various types of record and start measuring, calculating and counting revolutions. If you allow for a few estimates, averages and for my informal arithmetic, this is the result of my findings in tabular form.

## Standard-sized record formats to 1933: Playing times

Record Type	Date	size	g.p.i. (grooves per inch)	minutes	rpm
Gold-moulded cylinder	1901-13		100	1.9	160
Brown wax cylinder	1888-1912		100	2.7	120*
Standard 78	1896-1958	10"	c.95	3.1	78
Edison Diamond Disc	1913-1929	10"	150	3.8	80
Edison Amberol	1908-29		200	3.8	160
Hit-of-the-Week/Durium	1930-33	10"	c.168	4.75	78
Broadcast 4-Tune	1933	10"	c.147	5.57	78
4-in-1	1932-33	10"	c.155	5.98	78
RCA Victor LP	1931-32	10"	450	10	33.3
Edison LP	1926-27	10"	450	12	80
World Record/ Vocalion W series	1922-25	12"	c.118	13	25-65
RCA Victor LP	1931-32	12"	c.156	14	33.3
Edison LP	1926-27	12"	450	20	80
Edison electric transcription	1929-31	12"	300	c.30	36

\*Brown wax record speeds changed over the years from 90 to 100 to 120 rpm.

So it can be seen that lateral-cut electric records with a grooving of 150 to the inch were quite feasible in the 1930s - though a mechanical soundbox can rather chew them up. On a 12 inch record it would have given a playing time of about 8 minutes - quite useful for classical music. It now looks like a missed opportunity - but I suppose the depression spoilt its chances.

You might have thought that RCA Victor in 1931 would have learnt from the Edison flop of five years later, but no. So perhaps it's not strange that it took another 17 years for a successful LP to be launched - from Columbia. And now we're back to centre-start hill-and-dale Berliner-sized single-sided records (a.k.a. CDs).

# WORLD RECORD LTD. AND PEMBERTON BILLING'S OTHER VENTURES

by Frank Andrews

This article is based on a programme given to by Frank Andrews to the Society at the July 1994 monthly meeting. Frank was assisted by George Woolford and the late Len Watts.

Before he started Frank acknowledged the help given by Mike Sutcliffe, from Australia. Mike had previously given a programme on Pemberton Billing in Australia and he made some of his material available for the present talk.

A selection of the music from Gounod's *Faust*, recorded by the Central Band of The Royal Air Force on World Record No.42 opened the proceedings. This was a 12" disc which played for 9 minutes each side. This record was played on a standard gramophone fitted with a Pemberton Billing invention, the World Record Controller. This device was designed to play records with a constant linear surface speed (a distinctive feature of World Record Ltd.'s discs). Constant linear speed was a characteristic of phonograph cylinder records but had never before been used commercially for the production of disc records. It was this feature which allowed for longer playing times compared with the other makes of disc records then on the market.

A standard 12" disc playing at 80rpm has about 37 inches of groove passing beneath the soundbox with the first revolution of the recording. By the time the final revolution of the playing groove is reached only about one third of that length passes beneath the needle. Consequently, at that point, the wave formation of the recorded sounds are bunched much closer than at the commencement, often giving rise to distortion and greater wear than at the start of a piece of music with similar characteristics; the needle with its soundbox experiencing much more difficulty in following the compacted grooves than those at the outer edge of the disc.

Discs recorded with constant linear speed did not have to overcome such compaction of the wave forms and the longer playing time was another advantage. World Records were made with four grades of starting speeds, marked on the labels as either A, B, C or D. These letters correspond to

those marked on a dial fitted to the controller. D is the most common letter starting at about 30rpm with about 70rpm attained at the end of playback. Advertisements claimed that the discs played three to five times longer than any other discs on the market when used with the World Record Controller.

{At this point World Record 205 (matrix R 167) with Dorothy Clark (contralto) singing *Softly Awakes My Heart* was played.}

## Who was Pemberton Billing?

The Hon. Noel Pemberton Billing, the founder of World Record Ltd. Was a prolific inventor and led a varied and exciting life. During his lifetime he made applications for over 88 Royal Letters Patent.

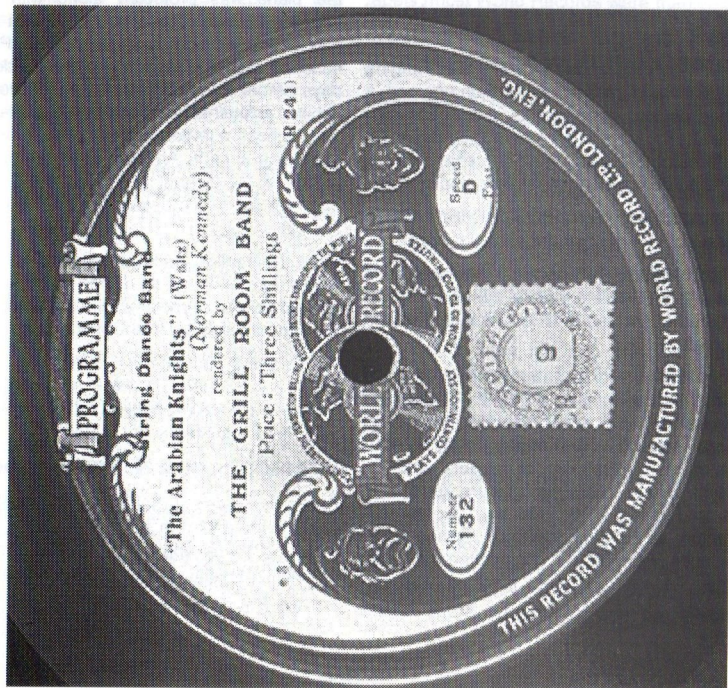
As a young lad he earned a reputation of being a difficult child to discipline which resulted in him being expelled from a number of educational establishments and, it was under such circumstances, that he ran away to South Africa at the age of 14 years in 1894.

On reaching Durban he became employed as a bricklayer but, in a very short while, he left that trade and joined the Natal Mounted Police Force. During his time with that service he became one of the police boxing champions at the age of 16.

During the British War against the Boers, which had begun in 1899, Billing joined the British Armed Forces and served as a trooper and a scout under General Buller. He must have returned to England in 1900, for it was on September 25th of that year he applied for his first patent, which was for a novel cigarette holder, but which he abandoned.

He returned to South Africa where he founded a periodical called *The British South Africa Autocar*. He also took on rôles in staged musicals, an activity he continued, to some extent, when he returned once again to England. That must have been before October 1903, for it was on the 26th of that month he applied for his second patent, this time for a contraption relating to powder puffs.





World Record No.132



World Record Controller fitted to an HMV 163 Re-entrant Horn Model



## Some Further Inventions of Billing with Patents Applied For

In 1904 Billing applied for patents for retrieving cigarettes, one at a time, from sealed cigarette packets and for a tilting electric lamp-shade. In 1906 his inventions included improvements to typewriters. Another improvement to typewriters was covered by one of his three patent applications in 1907.

{At this juncture *The Arabian Knights* - Waltz a dance music number by the Grill Room Band was played. This was one of the rarer 10" versions on No.132. The audience also had a chance to hear how this recording sounded without the use of the World Record Controller.}

## Pemberton Billing - Pioneer Aviator

By 1908 Billing, already having taken an interest in motor cars, had then become interested in the new development of flying machines. (Readers will recall that Mons. Blériot was the first to fly across the English Channel in 1909.)

During 1908 Billing acquired 3,000 acres of land near Farnbridge (quite close to the River Crouch in Essex). There he hoped to establish an aerodrome, which was to have two large hangars and to build 20 4-room bungalows, thus hoping to establish a centre for aviation development by attracting some of the increasing numbers of pioneer aviators. He finally ended leasing out to others whatever facilities he had constructed.

He had eleven patents applied for in 1908, ranging from improvements in internal combustion engines, a game scoring device, door latches, calculating machines cigarette holders, carpenters' planes, toilet requisites, to automatic playing-cards dealer, cleats, envelope folding devices and measuring appliances.

In March he launched a new periodical called *Aircraft* at 6d. per issue, but it only ran for eleven issues.

It was at this period he became involved in a business buying and selling yachts, based in Southampton, where he also found time to design different forms of aircraft.

In 1909 in he applied for a patent for a method of balancing internal combustion engines. For the next three years he made no applications for patents as his attentions were devoted mostly to flying machines. His next applications for patents were in October 1913. These were for matters related to aeroplanes and flying boats. He had already acquired a factory in 1912 in the Southampton area, where machines were to be constructed from his own designs. As each different machine was fin-

ished, it was marked with his initials, as P.B.1 and onwards. It was this business which became registered as the Supermarine Aircraft Works Ltd., and where, after the First World War, the Schneider Trophy racing seaplanes and the Supermarine Spitfire fighter planes were made. Both aeroplanes and flying boats were in production when Pemberton Billing obtained his Royal Aero Club Flying Certificate in 1913.

{Another break in the narrative allowed for the playing of the *Kashmiri Song* from Amy Woodforde-Finden's *Four Indian Love Lyrics* with the Lionel Cross Piano Trio on World Record 403. The four songs were all accommodated on the one side (9 minutes duration)).

Once he was allowed to fly Pemberton Billing placed a bet with another pioneer constructor and flyer, Geoffrey de Havilland, wagering that he would be the first to fly - and he was - flying what was described as a rather wobbly figure of eight configuration early one morning.

## Pemberton Billing - Royal Naval Air Service

The two patents relating to aircraft and one for an anchor were applied for during 1913. At an Aero-Show, held in March 1914 he had his Mark PB.1 aeroplane on display. At this point a transparency of the plane was projected along with other slides showing various other types of aircraft which Billing had developed and had constructed. PB.9 was not included, a plane which had its maiden flight two days before the outbreak of war, neither was PB.25 shown, a "pusher" type propelled plane. PB.29 was the highest numbered type shown, which was a sea-going aircraft. Another of his aeroplanes was a wedge shape design. Such was the condition of his business when War was declared on Germany in August.

Billing immediately volunteered for the Royal Naval Air Service and it is said that he organised the first air-raid on the Zeppelin works at Friedrichshafen, on the German side of Lake Constance.

As Squadron Commander Billing he resigned from the R.N.A.S., early in 1916, in order to stand for Parliament, as an Independent, in an election in the Mile End constituency of London.

## Gramophones & Pemberton Billing

During his short career in the R.N.A.S. Billing had become interested in the gramophone, so much so, that in 1915 he applied for a patent to cover for a repeating device, made in two forms, for playing



records continuously. It involved the employment of two soundboxes facing in opposing directions. At the end of playing a record there was a movement through 180 degrees to bring the alternative sound-box into use.

Billing had three other patent applications during 1915. One was for aircraft, one for ordnance and the third for motor vehicles. There was also a report that he had applied for a patent to cover a floor-standing gramophone, which could be converted to a table machine and again converted, this time to a portable gramophone, but no confirmation has been found in the Science Reference Library.

{A recording of The Sterling Saxophone Four performing *Why Dear* (matrix R4) on World Records 103 & 109 was played.}

Billing's election bid had failed but, in March 1916, he had a second opportunity in an election for East Hertfordshire. There he was successful aided with two political speeches he had recorded by The Gramophone Co. Ltd. One speech was *Why I resigned my position*. This title was changed to *On Air Defence* before pressing. The other was *Hot Air Experts*, perhaps a snide reference to argumentative members of the Government and Parliament for, in June 1916, he was highly critical of national policy in the use of aircraft in the war against Germany.

It was around this time that it was reported that Billing was such a gramophone enthusiast that he had a machine in every room of his house and it was also stated that he liked one particular item so much that he played it 43 times in succession! (We said that in our opinion he had been trying out his repeater device!)

Billing remained an elected Member of Parliament from 1916 to 1921, when he resigned. During his first year as an MP he wrote a book *The Air War and How to Wage It*. (He had been instrumental in organising The Royal Flying Corps, which had been founded in 1912.) As the Hon. Noel Pemberton Billing, M.P. he sold (but retained an interest) in the Supermarine Aviation Works in Southampton, and he was also involved in the establishment of The Air Council.

## Billing - A Libel Defendant

In 1917 Billing not only wrote his autobiography but began publishing a periodical called *The Imperialist*, but quickly changed its name to *The Vigilante*. It was due to an article which was published in one of its issues that, what was called "The Libel Case of the Century", was instituted. It was brought on by Maud Allen, the actress, who was appearing in Oscar Wilde's play *Salomé*. She had been accused of

"sexual deviation". This was now in 1918. Billing conducted his own defence but used the case as a vehicle to reveal the existence of a "Black Book" which contained the names of 47,000 British persons alleged to be susceptible to German pressure and who would be liable to obstruct the allied war effort under instructions from German agents and who would be blackmailed so to do because of known "devious activities". Billing also made it known that he had been consulted by some military conspirators who had wanted to see the Government put into difficulties, or even brought down, as it had become known that secret peace negotiations had been entered into with Germany which was not to the liking of staff members of the Army. At one point, Billing said the judge himself was named in the German "Black Book". Billing was found innocent of libelling Maud Allen.

As a result of things he once said in The House of Commons, he was suspended from the Chamber, but he refused to go and it took the Sergeant-at-Arms and four others to remove him bodily from the room.

{An extract from Dvorák's *String Quartet in F major (Nigger Quartet)* was now played. It was recorded complete on two sides on World Record 415 and 416 (23 minutes duration) by the Leo Abkov String Quartet The labels were marked Speed B on the labels (most World Records were marked Speed D)).

## Constant Linear Speed Recording and Playback with the Controller

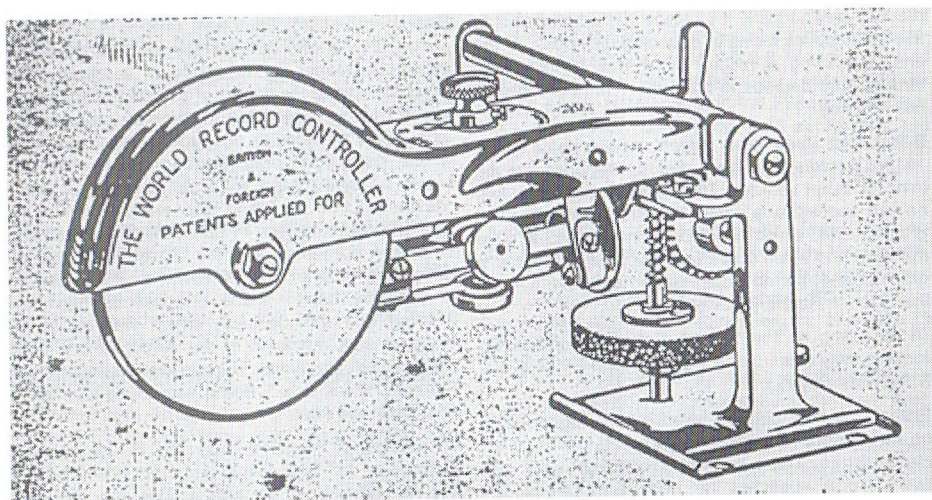
Billing applied for Letters Patent for improvements to Walls, Heating and Cooking Apparatuses and Stoves in 1920. In the year he resigned his seat in The House of Commons (1921) he submitted patents for a motion picture apparatus and a pedestal-operated device for winding spring gramophone motors.

In January 1922 he applied for a patent for a larger than usual diaphragm for soundboxes to be made from wood and tapered, reducing in dimension from the back to front.

It is well to point out here that Pemberton Billing often abandoned his claims for patents. Six months later he applied for two separate patents covering the mechanism for regulating the playing of constant linear speed recorded discs. This was the Controller.

Once in production and on sale, an accompanying leaflet stated: "The illustration (which we projected) demonstrates the controller in position. It will be observed how the Controller carriage follows the track of the needle. The picture illustrates the Selector laying on the record, by the employment of which, any song or item can be selected at will







without playing the whole record. World Records can be played on any gramophone by the introduction of this small device which is as easy as fixing on your machine as the fixing of a bell on your bicycle.

The Controller consists of two chief parts. 1. The carriage, which includes the large rubber wheel, is used to control the rotating speed of the record. 2. The standard, or base, which includes the smaller wheel, and is employed for moving the carriage bodily across the record.

The World Record Controller is a scientific instrument, extraordinarily accurate in action, has no mechanism to get out of order and can be operated, at will, without requiring a knowledge of engineering.

World Record Limited have such confidence in this instrument that they give a Guarantee in Perpetuity. Each instrument is thoroughly tested and securely packed in a separate box containing a book of instructions for fitting on your gramophone."

{George Woolford then gave a demonstration of The World Controller in action}

Billing applied for other patents in 1922. One was for a motion picture apparatus to operate in synchronisation with a gramophone. Another was for an electric-motored device to wind up spring gramophone motors and the third was for a golf practising device.

As an applicant in 1922, Billing showed two addresses; at 177 Piccadilly, London W1 and at 2, Piccadilly Arcade, London W1. But with his last application, in November 1922, which was for a patent for a recording machine that recorded discs at a constant linear speed, his address was given as The Cromwell Works, Mortlake, London S.W.14.

In all other respects the World Record recording machines were similar to others in use by the industry.

## World Record Limited

World Record Ltd. Had already been founded on May 19th 1922 with a £10,000 nominal capitalisation with 9,000 10% cumulative preference shares at £1 each and 40,000 ordinary shares at sixpence each. The registered office was at Billing's No.2 Piccadilly Arcade address. At first, there was only one other director, Herbert W. White, a director of Wright Brothers, Yacht Builders, Engineers and Ship Repairers, located in Southampton, and also a director of Southern Counties Guarantee Investment Company.

By the end of July, the registered office had moved to Cromwell Works and 2 Piccadilly Arcade became the showrooms for World Record products.

{Part of the Broadway Dance Band's performance of (*I'm just*) *Longing for You* (matrix R133 on World Record 109) (and possibly World Record 141) was then played.}

A third director was appointed to the board on July 31st then in August came the report that World Record Ltd. Had purchased the patent rights of the Vistaphone Company of the U.S.A.

*The Talking Machine World* of the U.S.A. informed that there were 150 titles in the process of being recorded by World Record. The sales manager, a Mr Hughes, stated that as the discs would play for 20 minutes (12" size) they would be single-sided. Only if there was a demand would double-sided discs be put into production.

The works, at Cromwell House, by this time were in full operation. There were to be three classes of 12" discs, selling at 5 shillings, 7 shillings and 10 shillings and sixpence each, priced according to class and the reputations of the artists or instrumental combinations. Herbert A. Goodey was the recording expert.

It had been planned to deliver the first records and the first published list in December 1922, the month which a World Record representative was a visitor at our Society's monthly London meeting, at which he demonstrated three of the 12" discs, and which he claimed his company had produced an 18" disc which had a playing duration time of 1½ hours!

## The Cromwell Works

The Cromwell Works at Riverside, Mortlake S.W.14 were installed in an old picturesque mansion, comprising 40 rooms, and which stood on the site of a former house in which Oliver Cromwell had once been its resident; a part of one of the original walls remained covered with ivy. The works were within a six acres site having rural aspects. There were two recording rooms, a reception room, a concert room, a music library, store and stock rooms, general offices and managerial and departments sections. Modern up-to-date equipment was installed. As soon as home demand had been met it was intended to open up American and overseas markets.

The first list and its records were put on sale in October 1922 and all were made as double-sided discs and offered at the prices quoted previously. These prices met those of The Gramophone Co. Ltd.'s HMV black, plum and red labels. There were 31 discs on the list, playing between 10 and thirty minutes.

{At this point World Record 205 (Matrix R235) of Teresa del Riego's *Sink, Red Sun* sung by Margaret Wray (contralto) with piano was played.}



The Controllor needed to be set at one of four speeds according to the symbols printed on the labels (the letters A to D being used), this set the initial speed of the turntable. The duration of playing time was also printed on the labels.

When a statement was made in November 1922 that World Records played from 7 minutes to 17 minutes that probably included the 10" discs which appeared for the first time. although some 12" discs had only 7 minutes playing time, and some 10" had less than 5 minutes. The 10" discs sold for 3s. 6d. each. Charles Gendle, the company secretary was another who spoke of the playing duration time of World Records, he stating that some lasted as long as 20 minutes.

Billing, himself, now went off to America, where he demonstrated discs in New York City which played for as long as 30 minutes. That was in December.

With the December issues came two more categories of 10" discs, priced at 4 shillings and 5 shillings respectively, and two more directors were appointed to the Board on the 19th, a Mr Reginald A. Blackford and Charles C. Dalton.

At the end of 1922, Billing returned from America where he had been negotiating with some businessmen over marketing rights in the U.S.A. for World Records and the Controllor. If these negotiations failed he was prepared to export directly to American record dealers.

The major shareholders in World Record Ltd. were Billing, who held shares to the value of £1,467, William White who held shares to the value of £1,150 and Alfred and Alice Barclay, who between them, held shares to the value of £1,045.

## **World Record Limited, 1923 British Trade Industries Fair and King George V**

There had been a rush of orders for this novelty of longer playing records over the Christmas period and, in spite of accelerated production at the works, this caused a delay in delivery records for the January 1923 supplement.

A Debenture Mortgage was approved on the December 31st 1922 for £10,000 with the first £5,000 series offered on January 30th 1923 on the property and the undertaking. A covering deed was signed on March 1st 1923.

In 1923 The British Industries Trade Fair was held at The White City Exhibition Hall from January 9th to March 7th and World Record Ltd. demonstrated its discs and Controllor at Stand 55. It is reported that during his visit to the Fair HM King George V

stopped at Stand 55 and listened to a recording of comedian, Fred Duprez, in his rendering of *Do Married men Make the Best Husbands?* This was one of the rare single-sided World Record discs. This monologue was also coupled with another recording on a double-sided disc.

By this time a 39-page catalogue had been printed and 91 different discs issued since October 1922, and recordings of Dance Music were available on 12" discs for only 3 shillings.

Another £1,100 of the approved debenture had been taken up by May 10th 1923.

Now although the products of World Record Ltd. were regularly advertised in the trade journal *Sound Wave*, no additionally issued records were ever listed but it is certainly a fact that more items were added to the catalogue, even as late as mid-1924, because recordings from The Emerson Phonograph Co. of America were adapted to constant linear surface speed discs and issued under the pseudonym American Jazz Combination on World Record discs. Some of these Emerson titles were not issued in the U.S.A. until March 1924.

Billing must have negotiated for Emerson masters, either whilst in America or later by correspondence. Advertisements in December 1923 stressed that World records played three to five times longer than standard 78rpm discs.

{Another item sung by Margaret Wray was played. This was Florence Aylwood's *Love's Coronation* on World Record 205}

## **Billing's Flexible Discs**

Only one patent was applied for by Billing in 1923. This was from his Piccadilly Arcade address in May and it was for his invention for making records by impregnating woven materials with suitable substances and then moulding recorded impressions on long lengths of material to be parted after drying. Combined woven webs could be used. Based upon the development of that process the Featherweight Flexible Records Ltd. company was registered on June 22nd 1923 and capitalised similarly to World Record Ltd. This new company's product was the Fetherflex, a 10" diameter disc which was pliable and unbreakable and played in the conventional fashion (it was not a constant linear surface speed record).

The Board of Directors comprised H. W. White (already a director World Record Ltd.), his brother A. R. White (of their yacht building business in Southampton), Pemberton Billing, Fred May (also of World Record Ltd.) and D. F. Cripps.



Fetherflex, priced at 1s. 3d. each, first went on sale in November 1923. Unfortunately the quality of the material was so poor and caused so much surface noise that a stock of 200,000 discs had to be destroyed.

This is what a correspondent of the *Gramophone, Wireless and Talking Machine News* had to remark in his letter to that periodical, which was headed *Freak Records*:

"Sir; Some time ago I saw reference to records on handkerchiefs and scraps of linen which you appeared to accept with a grain of salt and with which view I concurred. I have since had occasion to change my view. I sent half-a-crown to Featherweight Flexible Records at 3 and 4 Princes Street Square for a folder containing two 10" double-sided Fetherflex discs. By return came an album containing two discs of American cloth or of shellaccd artists canvas on which the recorded grooves were imprinted, the centres being ornamented with distinctive ornate labels. The lightness and flexibility were apparent and, with some misgivings I tried one. This gave forth a tolerable orchestral rendering of average

volume, well played by the violin solo of *The Intermezzo* from *Cavalleria Rusticana* and was quite good.

The principal faults of these astonishing productions are excessive surface noise and a tendency to buckle - the first by the coarseness, the second by the thinness of the material used. Nobody can expect a perfect disc at this price and whether the Fetherflex discs will make their way into general popularity, or not, remains to be seen. All gramophonists, however, would do well to buy some if only for retention as curiosities.

I have seen some peculiar discs in my time but these are easily the most unique. When their music fails they will be still useful as table mats." (Signed J. C. W. Chapman).

The side referred to was matrix F100 on the second type of Fetherflex discs No.50 which began the second catalogue number series. The violinist was Jules Lacoste with The Cavendish Orchestra.

**To be continued**

## CLP.G.S. BOOKLIST - LATEST ADDITIONS

**THE TALKING MACHINE - AN ILLUSTRATED COMPENDIUM** by Tim Fabrizio and George Paul. This detailed work will be the reference book for machines against which all others will be judged. It contains magnificent coloured pictures and plenty information on talking machines. Inevitably most of the machines are of American origin but that should not deter anyone interested in machines from purchasing the book. Collector's are advised to purchase this book before it goes out of print. Price **£55 plus postage.**

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**Overseas** **add 15%** of total price unless total order is less than **£1**, then apply minimum charge of **£1**.

# MUSIC.....WHAT'S IT ALL ABOUT?

## An Individual Viewpoint

by Steve Miller

On considering the question of the value of records in our everyday lives, I can only conclude that they must be essential at times to enrich our existence but ironically remain ultimately disposable.

To qualify my remarks I can only state that it is my own personal opinion and reflects my conclusion having tried desperately to answer myself a simple question: why can't I listen to a record now which ten years ago was practically glued to my turntable?

Musical tastes change as we get older and as fashion changes as indeed with all other aspects of our lives, for example, the cars we drive, the clothes we wear, the way we decorate and furnish our homes. But what chemical changes must take place in the human brain to enable it all to be possible? I say this because scientists claim that when we hear something which is pleasing to our ears, a chemical is released which gives us the feeling of well-being. Music is, therefore, a drug. Whilst some of us may need a fix of Duke Ellington to get intoxicated, others might be trying Melba or Caruso.

The truth is no music is more important than any other. Musical preference is a matter for an individual. However, a large number of the listening public are foolishly snobbish and pompous about their private record collections. Take the dedicated Jazz fan who secretly conceals the complete set of The Beatles LP's in a wardrobe in fear of the shame which might be brought upon in the event of his Jazz club friends finding out!

I am unreservedly and unashamedly open about my late night affairs with my Hi-Fi.

Why should we be anything else or make music the subject of our petty prejudices or mockery. I say that if a record stimulates your ears, mind, heart or feet in any way then who are we to criticize. I, for example, am left cold by hearing the marvelous voice of Patti. But does that mean that Patti is no good for all her failures? Of course it doesn't. Her voice was just created to entertain someone else. On the contrary, if I was asked about Amelita Galli-Curci, then my reaction would be stark in comparison. Hairs stand up on the back of my neck when I hear her sing *Home Sweet Home* or *Last Rose Of Summer*. And as for those Spice Girls.....well you can dance to them!

But seriously speaking, who are we to judge good from bad. Time alone will tell. The Beatles were thought to be a "one-hit-wonder" in 1962, but went on to be the most successful British popular recording artists this century. Now nearly thirty years after their demise their influence is only just being measured or considered. "Classical" (not a term I am happy to use) virtuoso, Nigel Kennedy, would not have to think twice about performing Lennon & McCartney numbers alongside Beethoven pieces or Jimi Hendrix for that matter.

The whole musical spectrum has opened up. Blues, Jazz, Folk, Country, Opera, Rock and that music which I prefer to call "Traditional" have all at times been exposed to each other and comfortably co-existed. When Elvis Presley sang *That's Alright Mama* in 1954, Sam Phillips (Producer) was credited with creating a "cross-over" record AND a new style of music in Rock'n'Roll. He had engineered and produced a Country



and Blues fusion suitable for the mass market. Not for the first time in musical history, a melting-pot situation arose.

Younger people are now therefore much more likely to investigate and seek out records from by-gone eras. Older members of society tend to stay with the music that they grew up with as impressionable teenagers. The reason for this is very simple. We nearly have one hundred years of commercial recordings behind us. As teenagers grow tired of that girl group, whom incidentally are now considerably richer than they were a year ago (remember The Beatles) they can be easily enticed by their elder peers to listen to music from different decade which may have some particular relevance to them. After all, popular music is continually being re-invented and recycled for each generation.

Once that the interest is established then the records will sell themselves. It is perhaps here that we may find the key to investigating which records have the longevity and "keep" beyond their contemporary time-frame. In the Edwardian era, listeners had no such point to refer back to.

It sometimes makes me laugh to hear parents saying that their children don't appreciate their music, when in actual fact, whilst this can certainly be true, it is more likely that it is the parents who do not like their children's taste in music and furthermore never well. The children however, can grow up and continue to enjoy the "best" of their own generation, whilst later also reflecting on the "best" of the parents' generation.

Perseverance is the key to developing a fondness for a particular style of music or a specific record. It's the same as adjusting oneself to drive a new car or getting accustomed to a new home; you have to give it a chance.

Practise makes perfect they say. And they could be right.

I have always admired the former BBC disc-jockey John Peel, who literally has hundreds of thousands of records. He would be the first to admit that some are completely unlistenable, but his willingness to investigate all manner of recording artists from all over the globe, no matter how obscure, has given him a unique musical sensibility.

As a CLPGS member, I would guess that I am perhaps one of a few members who is fortunate enough to be able to appreciate such diverse music. Lou Reed (of *Walk On The Wild Side* fame) albums such as *New York* stack up with Glenn Miller's Army Air Force Band recordings, Amelita Galli-Curci 78's and the complete works of Patsy Cline and Buddy Holly. To be honest, at times it's a nightmare deciding just what record to put on! But I, like John Peel, could never rid myself of any of these items as and when or if the boredom factor takes over. My philosophy is simple and doubtless shared by all readers, that if something was relevant to you at some point in your life then it deserves pride of place in your record collection and not hidden away at that!

In time, successive generations will ponder the musical riches of this century and wonder how it all got started and how best to view it. A problem facing them and to a certain degree facing us today, is that of choosing which issue of a recording to choose from for a particular piece. After all, some recordings have been issued more than six times in different formats.

I am a believer in the synergy which exists between a recording and the best of its contemporary playback equipment. For example, Bessie Smith singing *Gimme A Pigfoot* on 78 played on an EMG Mark Xb gramophone sounds right and has real



"presence". Play the same recording however from a recent Charly label CD and my Arcam CD player turns into a battered 97 Portable with an inch diameter rusty steel needle playing somewhere under six feet of water!

By comparison, the current *Jazz Greats* series of CD's and cassettes issued by Marshall Cavendish Publications, and including the likes of Fats Waller, Duke Ellington and Billie Holiday (one of my favourite artists) are thoroughly excellent and warmly recommended. In fact, taking the Fats Waller CD as an example, repeating the above experiment had far reaching benefits for the CD presentation. So should one discard the 78's in this case and admit that the CD version is the definitive one. Full credit should also be given to Nimbus Records for their efforts. Those of us who have been fortunate enough to have the pleasure of visiting their premises near Monmouth, will testify to the sincerity of Norman White in his attempts to recapture the magic of early opera recordings and authentically reproduce them on CD from commercial 78's. The question remains though: how long before the CD is redundant too and yet another format takes over?

The significant developments in recording, mixing and engineering technology have considerable implications with turning old recordings into new recordings. The music business wants our money badly and temptation is daily laid at our doors with the continual recycling, re-issuing, repackaging and compiling of material which goes on.

I am brought to consider the Time Life series of LP's entitled *The Swing Era* which covers the years 1930-1970 over 15 box sets containing a total of 45 LP's. At the turn of the 1970's it was presumably considered better to re-record all of the jazz and swing era hits again with Billy May's Orchestra rather than "remaster" the original recordings of the artists which the series covers. The Big Band Era had effectively been over

for nearly twenty-five years initially due to the cost of setting-up a band after the war and later because teenagers had the cool hip-shaking Elvis to excite them.

In a brave and considerably costly attempt to re-ignite the swing flame after the event, Time Life records actually produced a remarkable set of recordings in their own right which today, twenty-seven years on, have a distinct character of their own. Production at the time was spared little expense and this shows clearly today. But, would any organisation bother today to undertake such painstaking efforts to recreate music from original score sheets when the technology is here to allow the remastering of the original recordings to obtain such a high quality standard. The answer is no. But, in 1970, the technology was probably not good enough for the standards expected by a record buying public which by then had been weaned on to quality Hi-Fi units.

There are other well documented examples like Buddy Holly's early amateur and demo recordings which were used for commercial releases after his premature death. A backing group called The Fireballs were recorded in the studio by his manager and producer, Norman Petty, and overdubbed on these early tapes to hide the technical flaws which were obvious and not acceptable to a listening public who had been used to his clean polished performances emanating from top New York studios. Today, this would never have happened. But, recording history has left us with a legacy of such recordings which at the best of times are unfathomable.

With the Time Life issue, we must also consider that rock'n'roll or popular music underwent a serious change at the end of the 1960's which might have looked like the end of the road for it and to some jazz fans the ideal time for a re-launch of Big Band music. Rock music had only existed for fifteen years, the same length of time that the Swing era had existed before and during the war.



The deaths of The Rolling Stones' Brian Jones, The Beach Boys' Carl Wilson, The Doors' Jim Morrison, Janis Joplin, Jimi Hendrix, the withdrawal of Bob Dylan from public life and the demise of The Beatles not to mention numerous other British and American groups all within a two year period, marked an important turning point whereby popular music was never the same afterward. It was during this time, that RCA Victor felt it necessary to kick-start Presley's failing career with TV specials wherein the King clearly looks nervous with the spotlight on him, knowing the pressure to win back public admiration was on.

Of course, nowadays little has changed. Large companies have to think big and anticipate the next craze with a careful eye on commercial sales knowing how fickle the public can be with the continual cycle of changing interests.

Should we therefore not pay too much attention to record sales today? Is a review of a record in the press more relevant to us. Again, personal preferences find their way into journalists' reviews so realistically we are no better informed anyway. The final decision in music rests with us all individually. We are all alone in our search for those magic, spine-tingling moments.

With that said, I'll don my fluffy slippers, pick up my pipe, settle down in my favourite chair, sip my Cocoa and to hell with it!....slip The Spice Girls CD into the slot.....Happy listening to all.

## CLP.G.S. BOOKLIST - LATEST ADDITIONS

*SINCE RECORDS BEGAN - EMI The First 100 Years* by Dr Peter Martland, our Chairman. Peter gives a most informative and readable account of the first 100 years of the disc recording industry in the United Kingdom. The book is full of illustrations from the EMI Archives, many of them shown to the general public for the first time. This is an essential buy for both the machine and record collector and is a snip at **£25 plus postage**.

*THE COLLECTORS' GUIDE TO HIS MASTER'S VOICE NIPPER SOUVENIRS* by Ruth Edge and Leonard Petts. A superb paperback of 1022 pages with around 2000 illustrations and pictures. An absolute must for collectors. **Price £20 plus postage**.

*EVA TAYLOR WITH CLARENCE WILLIAMS: EDISON LATERALS 4* - The latest Diamond Cut Productions CD (reviewed by Paul Collenette in this issue). **Price £13 plus postage**.

*THE COLUMBIA PHONOGRAPH COMPANION, VOLUME II: THE COLUMBIA DISC GRAPHOPHONE AND GRAFONOLA* by Robert W. Baumbach (with data collected by Mac Lackey) is available at **£20 plus postage**.

**CAT No BD09: THE COMPLEAT TALKING MACHINE** (2nd Edition) by Eric L. Reiss is now available at **£25 plus postage**.

See **page 371** for ordering information and postage rates.

## LET'S LISTEN AGAIN (1)

by Phil Bennett

This is the first of a series in which a jazz record collector (me) takes another look or rather a listen to his collection. All the leading discographers are to some extent collators of information provided by other collectors. It is simply impossible for the editors of the major discographical works to hear every record included in their discographies. The jazz discographers have been tirelessly uncovering the minutest details appertaining to jazz recordings since the 1930s, but mistakes can, and do, creep in from time to time. Also hitherto unknown or at least unheard recordings still turn up now and then. A classic being the discovery of a hitherto unknown pair of sides that included the master of jazz and blues clarinet - Johnny Dodds. Although recorded in 1928, these two recordings on Vocalion by Jasper Taylor's Washboard Band did not come to light until the early 1960s!

Another problem is that those musicians who participated in early recordings either couldn't be traced, couldn't remember, couldn't be bothered or simply told researchers what they thought that the researchers wanted to hear - accuracy being immaterial. For instance in the late 1930s Jelly Roll Morton expressed genuine surprise that anybody was interested in his 1920s recordings and when contacted by Brian Rust, the late Annette Henshaw, the incomparable singer of the late 1920s early 1930s was similarly astonished that people were collecting her old recordings. Given all this it is obvious that discographies can never be totally accurate, after all few of us have perfect memories and I wonder how many of us could remember with 100%

accuracy what we were doing and who with, on any given day say, in the 1960s?

Furthermore certain "folk traditions" have found their way into jazz discography. For instance, for as long as I can remember, it has been claimed that "Baby" Dodds was the drummer on the classic recordings by Louis Armstrong's Hot Seven. Who said so? Apart from the occasional cymbal crash the drums are completely inaudible. There is not even the slightest hint of a snare drum or wood block. With the first-rate Western Electric recording process being used by Okeh in 1927 there should not have been any problems in having Dodd's full kit in the studio. Baby Dodds was by nature an effective and lively drummer, listen to his work with his brother Johnny's Black Bottom Stompers recorded for Brunswick in the same year and you can hear for yourself. So was Baby Dodds in the Okeh studios on those five days in May 1927? Unless somebody can come up with some definitive evidence we shall probably never know the truth and seventy years after the event this is most unlikely.

One interesting little band that recorded for Edison in 1920 was Lopez and Hamilton's Kings of Harmony Orchestra. In spite of the long name this was a Dixieland quintet, the personnel of which has been the subject of debate over the last thirty years or so, although it would appear that we may now have a definitive list. Brian Rust's excellent major work *Jazz Records 1897-1942* lists five issued Edison titles (plus one unissued master) but in fact the band recorded a total of eleven issued titles for Edison. Does this mean that the six other titles are not worthy



of inclusion (which in the case of *Parade of the Wooden Soldiers* and *Nola* may well be true). After all the most unlikely of titles can yield some outstanding hot jazz. Has anybody heard the unlisted (in *Jazz Records* that is) titles?

Another Edison band that is worthy of more investigation is the Broadway Dance Orchestra. *Jazz Records 1897-1942* only lists two titles (*Doodle Doo Doo* and *Oh Peter* - Edison 51421) but from the list of titles known to have been recorded by this band, many have a marked jazz orientation. For instance *Beale Street Mama* on Edison 51069 and *Amberol* 4747 is an excellent jazz number equally as good as the version by the Fletcher Henderson Orchestra on Paramount. Incidentally *Doodle Doo Doo* was also issued on *Amberol* 4940, a fact not noted in *Jazz Records 1897-1942*.

Exactly who comprised the Broadway Dance Orchestra is unclear. Brian Rust notes that it may have been an augmented Original Memphis Five, but quite frankly I have my doubts. What few sides that I have heard by this band are not like the other

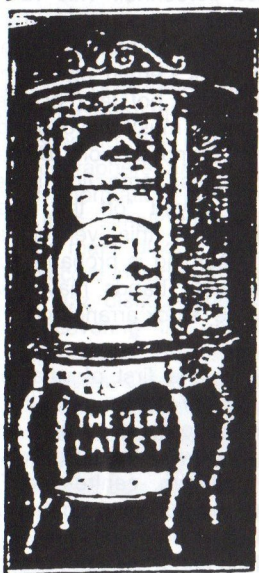
augmented OM 5 groups such as Bailey's Lucky Seven on Gennett. The most likely answer is that the Broadway Dance Orchestra was solely a studio group that did not have a fixed personnel. This varying personnel doubtless accounts for the varying jazz quality of the recordings - even in the 1920s New York certain studio musicians would have found hot jazz or even good quality hot dance music beyond their capabilities. The trumpeter on *Beale Street Mama* contributes some fine muted work even if it is played "off the dots" - the similarity between this version and the Henderson recording is probably accounted for because both bands may have been using the same "stock arrangement".

I will end this, the first of what may well become a regular series, with the thought that all **real** records go round at 78rpm, apart from Brunswick and Columbia which go round at 80rpm, centre-start Pathé at between 90 and 100rpm, most cylinders at 160rpm, G&T at around 74rpm and World Records which had a constant linear speed.



A toy HMV van from *The Collector's Guide to 'His Master's Voice' Nipper Souvenirs* by Ruth Edge and Leonard Petts. (Picture by courtesy of the EMI Group)

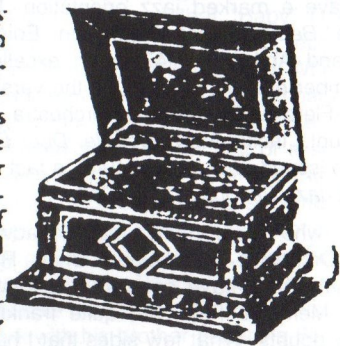
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# NICOLE CHAMPION CYLINDER RECORDS

by John S. Dales

Nicole Frères of Geneva, Switzerland are known for their finely crafted musical boxes fitted with precision-made mechanisms. Having been in business since 1815 they soon developed a reputation for high quality instruments and were to become one of the major leaders within the music box industry.

Towards the end of the last century sales of musical boxes fell into a sharp decline. This was the result of the rapidly increasing popularity and demand of talking machines and records.

To counteract this slump in sales of musical boxes, and probably with a certain amount of reluctance, Nicole Frères Ltd., London, E.C. entered into the business of supplying talking machines. The advertisement that accompanies this article is a photostat from a 1901 copy of *The Strand Magazine*. The Nicole musical box catalogues now included a selection of talking machines. Edison phonographs, via Edison-bell, and open-works Pathé models were the cylinder models whilst disc Gramophones and Zonophones were also featured, all with the appropriate records to play on them.

For those readers wishing to learn more of the Nicole business in London and the founding of the Nicole Record Co. Ltd. should read *The British Record Industry During the reign of King Edward VII - 1901-1910* by Frank Andrews published in *Hillandale News* Nos 198 to 205. The dates that follow I have taken from Frank's account.

In August 1903 the Nicole Record Co. Ltd. issued their own 7" single-sided disc which

had a cardboard base covered in brown celluloid. A similar 10" version of the Nicole Record appeared in March 1904. During 1905 the Nicole Record became double-sided and were issued with red paper labels.

Most collectors in Britain will be familiar with the Nicole Record. They obviously sold well and surviving examples turn up fairly frequently. However, they had their shortcomings and were prone to rapid groove wear. Most examples at our disposal today have heavy surface noise with splits and tears in the celluloid exposing the cardboard foundation.

Less familiar are the Nicole Champion cylinders. These first appeared in November 1905 and were contemporary with the double-sided discs. It is difficult for us now to understand why the Nicole Record Co. Ltd. decided to produce cylinders after having over 2 years experience of disc production. However one has to remember that the cylinder market in Britain was still very healthy in 1905 and perhaps Nicole wanted to capture a share of the market.

In 1906 the Nicole Record Co. Ltd. ceased trading due to the failure of the musical box side of the business. According to Frank Andrews, one of the directors purchased manufacturing equipment and continued to produce Nicole Records. This new concern traded as The Disc Record Co. Ltd. Its very title suggest that cylinder production had been abandoned. This would account for the scarcity of the Nicole Champion cylinders today.

The physical characteristics of the Nicole Champion cylinders are as follows:

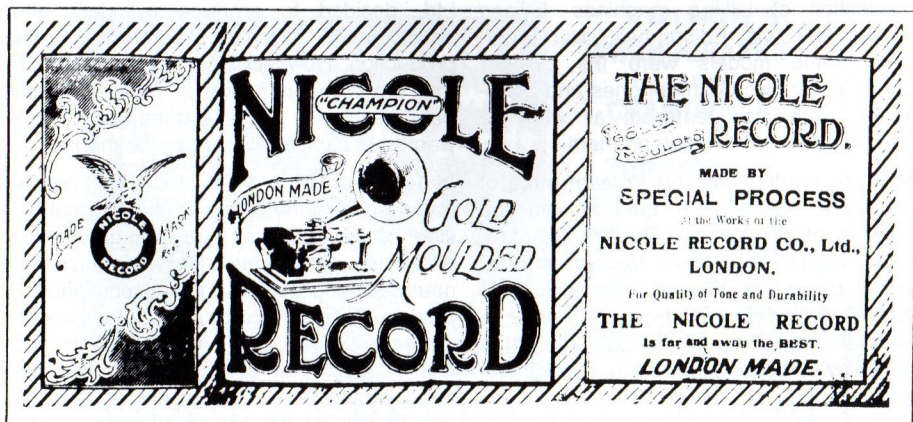
**Type:** Standard size  
**Speed:** 160rpm  
**Material:** Hard black wax - moulded  
**Length:** 4<sup>3</sup>/<sub>16</sub> "  
**Variations:** Early examples have a **flat** title end, later issues have a **bevelled** title end. Both types have incuse lettering filled with white pigment.  
**Identification:** All with spoken announcements

The earliest English Nicole discs were announced "Nicole Record". The selection and accreditation was rarely announced. By around the middle of 1904 even this simplified announcement had been phased out. The Champion cylinders however contained a full spoken announcement, as for example "Give my regards to Leicester Square, sung by Mr Erne Chester, Nicole Record." The brand name Champion was not mentioned on those examples examined.

I have not, to date, seen any listings of these cylinders. However surviving examples within either the 100 block or 1000 block. Artist include Alf Gordon, Erne Chester and George Preston.

The sturdy boxes are cotton lined with dark green end caps. The full body label is printed in green and gold on white paper. The small circular lid label, printed black on white, does not mention the artists.

I would welcome photocopies of any listings of these cylinders including details of actual records.







An EMG Mk. 10 'Oversize' Gramophone, English,  
*circa* 1947. Sold on 3rd March 1994 for £5,500.

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## (C.L.P.G.S.) BOOKLIST - LATEST ADDITIONS

**Cat No. BD 36** *Edison Blue Amberol Recordings 1912 to 1914* by Ronald Dethlefsen. Coloured soft cover, 206 pgs. Numerical list of records, many reproduced insert slips, alphabetical list of artists with monochrome illustrations. **Price £25 plus postage.**

*Phonograph Calendar for 1998* produced by Jean-Paul Agnard. Just under A4 size, 12 coloured photocopy quality of rare early machines like Pathé and Mr. Tinson (own construction), both of 1896; Bettini, Edison and Columbia [picture size 6¼"x4"]. Dates are annotated with suitable anniversaries. Plastic spiral bound on short edge. Price to be announced. Limited supply. **Please contact George at the Bookshop.**

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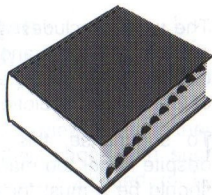
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## REVIEW



### British Light Music by Philip Scowcroft

Relatively few worthwhile books on light music have been published in this country. This means there is a dearth of readily accessible information to assist the researcher or to satisfy the curiosity of those who love such music. Here is a serious attempt to provide a useful reference volume, and the publishers are to be congratulated for making it available. A lot of hard work on the author's part went into it.

Mr Snowcroft, now retired, had been a senior local government solicitor in Doncaster. He has written and lectured on a variety of topics and had been music correspondent for three Doncaster newspapers. Since 1968, as Chairman of Doncaster's Arts and Museum Society, he has organised a lengthy series of lunch-hour concerts.

Subtitled *A Personal Gallery of 20th Century Composers* this is a handsomely produced paperback, printed on excellent quality paper. There are 29 illustrations, all but two being small portraits of composers. The author has the ability to hold the reader's attention, while providing a steady stream of information, together with personal comments. My sole complaint about his writing style is an excessive use of the word 'genre'.

He has provided a good Preface, and I congratulate him on the best definition of light music I have so far encountered. A long, detailed, and very interesting Foreword has been contributed by the composer Ernest Tomlinson, a splendid choice.

The book itself begins with 30 comprehensive essays, covering a total of 31 composers, appearing alphabetically and all deceased. They commence with Richard Addinsell and end with Haydn Wood, such worthy old-timers as George

H. Clutsam, Archibald Joyce, Montague Phillips and Wilfred Sanderson making their due appearance, along with comparative newcomers like Ronald Binge. In the section devoted to Edward German (Jones), he is referred to as German Edward Jones, presumably a transposition of names which should have been corrected.

The same format is employed for *The Best of the Rest*, 50 pages about composers (many still active) whom the author seems to regard as of less importance. It comes as a surprise to find Ivor Novello, of all people, thus categorised. Some of the biographical sketches are comprehensive too; others (especially of ballad composers) are much too sparse, suggesting a lack of interest on the author's part. Perhaps significantly, it is in this section that quite a few errors occur, partly the result of inadequate research, but also arising out of sheer carelessness.

He refers to Sir Frederick Hymen Cowen, whose first name was actually Frederic; and elsewhere is a little shaky on publication dates. May H. Brahe's *Bless This House* appeared in 1925, not 1927; Arthur A. Penn's *Smilin' Through* in 1918, not 1919. Also Penn's pretty song *Gingham Gown* is shown as *Gingham Green*, evidence of the author's occasional lack of care.

Was Montague Ewing's lively *Policeman's Holiday* ever a song? The original sheet-music cover shows it as a one-step or two-step. I am by no means certain that Richard Tauber's real name was Ernst Seiffert, although this is so stated in Peter Gammond and Peter Clayton's *A Guide to Popular Music*. My understanding is he was actually Richard Denemy, the child of an unmarried Catholic mother and a Jewish father. Not an error (but I find it somewhat irritating) in the tiny section allocated to Amy Woodforde-Finden, who deserves better treatment, Mr Snowcroft writes of this composer: "... lived in India, perhaps the inspiration for the very popular, ballad-sounding *Indian Love Lyrics*." Here is an instance of poor research or simply lack of knowledge. These lovely songs are settings from Laurence Hope's *The Garden of Kama*, a book of poems about India which created a sensation on first appearance in 1901, just as the songs did a year later. Finally, although Teresa del Fiego's father (Miguel) was

indeed Spanish, I think her mother, Clara, née Beall, was English.

In the main part of the book there is an essay on Hugh Fraser-Simson, principal composer of *The Maid of the Mountains* and other stage musicals. In every reference work I have consulted, and they include *Who's Who* and *Who's Who in the Theatre*, he is shown as Harold. If his real name was Hugh, I feel Mr Snowcroft should have made that clear.

Reverting to the lesser lights, several silly errors can also be found. Poor Ivor Novello's *Till the Boys Come Home* and *Keep the Home Fires Burning* (actually the chorus) are shown as two different songs, while Mantovani receives composer credit for *Red Sails in the Sunset*, *Serenade in the Night*, *Charmaine* and *The Bullfrog*. To be sure, he recorded all of them, but that is hardly the same thing.

The work concludes with a Select Discography, actually a lengthy and useful list of records, all but one on CD; a Select Bibliography; and a list of Light Music Societies.

To summarise, this is a praiseworthy book, despite rather too many avoidable errors, and it should be a must for everyone who enjoys the kind of music about which Mr Snowcroft writes so well. It is published by Thames Publishing, London at **£14.95** and should be available from all good booksellers.

**Peter Cliffe**



Peter Martland facing the media at the launch of his book on 10th July 1997 at 50th Floor, Canary Wharf Tower, London



## Since Records Began - EMI The First Hundred Years by Peter Martland

Some books are difficult to review because they draw the reviewer into their pages with such ease that he forgets he is supposed to be reviewing and becomes a reader. For me, this is such a book.

This book, published by B. T. Batsford is a very important book. It traces the history of a major company in the music business of the United Kingdom from its beginnings a century ago to its position today. With considerable access to the EMI archives and other supportive sources Dr Martland has judged his opportunities rightly and produced a weighty volume that will not be challenged in the imaginable future.

The layout of the book is conducive to helpful reading, the main narrative occupying the area either side of the fold of the page with appropriate photo box with caption or monograph in place of the usual references, and this is very effective. Some of these marginal entries are gems in themselves, the products of long research. For example the monograph entitled *The Experts' Travels 1899-1914* is a gem, and shows how the recording experts could relax as well as comb foreign countries for talent.

EMI came into being in 1931, a product of the depression when a merger took place between The Gramophone Co. Ltd. and the Columbia Graphophone Co. Ltd. and all their subsidiaries; among these were the Parlophone and Odeon labels.

1931-1934 was a difficult time the in trade, radio sales were climbing, and record sales at EMI in 1937 only reached 5 million, and this trend continued through World War 2 and into the 1950s. The first record boom since the 1920s came in the 'fifties with EMI's recognition of the LP and 45. Older collectors will recall the reluctance of the managing Director, Sir Ernest Fisk, to commit the Company to microgroove and vinyl and competition with Decca.

The component companies of EMI had made and sold their own instruments since their beginnings, and were not slow to go into radio in

the 1920s with laboratories to back technical advances. EMI was ready for television in the UK when the first regular service was started by the BBC at the end of 1936, and Nipper was to be seen more and more in the shop windows. Trade generally was not good in the 1930s and production now ran into household appliances, toasters, irons, refrigerators, washing machines, as well as radios, radiograms and electric record players.

Although the O.D.J.B. (Original Dixieland Jazz Band) made their master records at Victor, these were released in the United Kingdom by HMV in 1919, and caused a sensation, though not as much as the first Beatles releases 45 years later. The floodgates were opened to entirely different talents who collected gold or silver discs with regularity and trailed enormous followings; some records sold in their millions. How delighted would have been the experimenters who struggled to establish the company in the 'nineties.

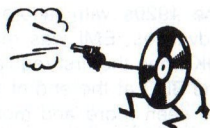
These pioneers included Fred Gaisberg (the recording expert) who retired in 1939 and died in 1951, Alfred Clark (the founder of the French branch of The Gramophone Company and the first Chairman of EMI) who retired in 1946 and died in 1950 and Trevor Williams (the first Chairman of The Gramophone Company) who sat on the board from 1899 to 1946.

The last occasion a substantial book on the history of The Gramophone Company/EMI appeared was in 1982, but it left a lot to be desired on account of inaccuracies. Since records began is a different proposition. Congratulations are due to the Chairman of The City of London Phonograph and Gramophone Society on the breadth of the subjects tackled and his depth of authorship that make this such a compelling book. It is a long book, and may it enjoy great success.

*Since Records Began - EMI, the First Hundred Years* by Peter Martland, 359 pages, cloth bound with dust wrapper, 11½ in. x 8¾ in. Price £25 plus £2.50 postage is available from the Society's Booklist.

**George Frow**

## REVIEW



### ***Sensation Rag* and *Shake and Break It* by the Original Syncopation Jass Band**

It is not a frequent request to be asked to review new recordings, it is far less common these days to be asked to review new cylinder recordings and even rarer to listen to and report on new production cylinders recorded by the mechanical process.

These two titles were recorded last July (1996) in Wolverhampton by Richard Taylor and produced in wax by Richard Taylor and Paul Morris.

Both cylinders are lively jazz records and should set any "Jazz-Nut's" feet a tapping. Both cylinders have wonderful atmosphere, typical of the early cylinders recorded by the mechanical process.

The music is supplied by the Original Syncopation Jass Band, tight little group of players who really get it together. The titles are *Sensation Rag* and *Shake and Break It*, Phil Bennett from the Midlands Group delivering the vocal breaks. There's reason alone for their purchase!

If any criticism is needed, it is that the piano is distant, but don't let that put you off - they really are a lot of fun.

If you are jazz orientated, want to hear what new, unworn, unaffected by mildew cylinders can offer, or simply wish to add to your collection of 2-minute wax cylinders, then here is a wonderful opportunity, and at **£15 for the pair**, what more could you ask. These are a must.

These cylinders are available from Richard Taylor, [REDACTED] Edgmond, nr. Newport, Shropshire F10 8HX, Tel: [REDACTED]

**L. Miles Mallinson**

### **Cornet Soloist of the Sousa Band - HERBERT L. CLARKE, Crystal Records CD450**

Herbert L. Clarke (1867-1945) was an American cornetist, composer, conductor, teacher and one of the most influential musicians in America in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century and early 20<sup>th</sup> century. He toured all over the world, made many recordings, composed music and conducted many of the major bands in the United States.

This CD contains a wide selection of Clarke's disc recordings from 1900 to 1922. Three record companies are represented. Victor from 1900 to 1914, Columbia from 1916 and 1917 and Brunswick from 1922.

I had never heard any of Clarke's recordings before listening to this CD. I had only heard of him by word of mouth. Once I put the CD in my player and started to listen to the recordings I was immediately struck by the superb quality of his playing. It is quite evident that Herbert L. Clarke was a cornet player of the first magnitude. I have one or two 78s of another great American cornetist Jules Levy but after listening to this CD and then listening to the Levy 78s I think Herbert L. Clarke is much more accomplished performer. There are some recordings with Sousa's Band (of which he was the solos cornetist for a time), others are with orchestra and others with unnamed bands.

My favourite numbers were mostly Clarke's own compositions like *Bride of the Waves*, *Caprice Brillante (The Débutante)*, *Sounds from the Hudson (Valse Brillante)*, *Twilight Dreams Waltz-Intermezzo* and *Stars in a Velvet Sky*.

The transfers from the original 78s were done by Seth B. Winner. They are some of the best I've heard. Seth B. Winner is one of that rare breed, a transfer engineer who can remove most of the surface noise of the original records without removing the high notes and reducing the dynamic range of the recording.



There are exemplary notes with the CD (except for one mistake where Adolphe Adam is given as the composer of *Holy City* instead of Stephen Adams). These include an informative biography of Herbert L. Clarke, an interesting section giving the reasons for issuing the CD and a further section giving some details about the transfer process. Full discographical details of the records are also given.

Altogether this is an excellent CD and I can thoroughly recommend it. Unfortunately Crystal records do not currently have a UK distributor. However it can be ordered direct from the in the USA Their address is: Crystal Records, [REDACTED] Camas, WA 98607, USA.

**Chris Hamilton**

### **Peter Dawson - Original Recordings, CDMFP 6351**

The above CD is one of a new series of bargain CDs issued on the Music for Pleasure label. All the original recordings are owned by the EMI Group. Most of the recordings on this CD were made with the microphone and therefore cover the middle period of Peter Dawson's long recording career. His first recordings were made in 1904 and his last in the early days of stereo LPs.

The selections here include many of Peter Dawson's most popular numbers such as *Old Father Thames*, *Boots*, *Old Comrades of the Boys of the Old Brigade*, *Glorious Devon*, Katie Moss' *The Floral Dance*, *Phil the Fluter's Ball* and *Bachelor Gay* from German's *Merrie England*. These and the other selections show off Peter Dawson's art to fine effect. I wish we had singers like him today. His diction was excellent.

Most of the transfers have been competently carried out. The transfer engineer's name is not given. Most of the clarity and dynamic range of the original recordings have been retained. The mastering for CD was done by Masterpiece Mastering.

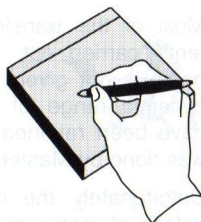
Unfortunately the notes do not give any details of matrix numbers, catalogue dates or recording dates. This I find quite inexcusable. No matter what market the CD is aimed for the recordings are all historical and full details of matrix catalogue number and recording dates should be given. This will be useful for purchasers who do not have ready access (like the seasoned collector) to such information.

Nevertheless I can still recommend this CD and although I have most of the material on the original 78s I shall return to the CD because it is so user friendly!

Peter Dawson - Original recordings **CDMFP 6351** is available from most good record shops at around **£5.99**.

**Chris Hamilton**

# LETTERS



## Catherine Mentiplay

Dear Chris,

I read with great interest a letter in the August issue asking for information on Catherine Mentiplay. Although I have nothing of a personal nature to say, she took part in a *Messiah* given by the Royal Choral Union in Edinburgh on New Year's Day 1916. Her fellow soloists were: Caroline Hatchard, John Harrison and Frederick Austin. In the evening of the same day, a Scottish concert was given by the same artists. I hope this snippet will be of use to Peter Cliffe.

Best wishes,

Ewen Langford, London NW3

## Help Please (1)

Dear Chris,

As I would like to play vertical-cut records on my HMV gramophone (table model with tapered tone arm, prior to 1920), could anyone supply a soundbox to be mounted on my machine? Such reproducers do exist as some time ago I saw a Gramophone Co. Monarch fitted with one of these.

Speeds of vintage records: as there is no indication whatsoever on many old records as to what their playing speed should be can anyone let me know the best way to find out the exact speed to play each record?

I would also be grateful if anyone could let me know who can supply me with bamboo and fibre needles.

Yours sincerely,

Armand Mangin, Europagallery 5/113, B-8400 Ostend, Belgium

## Help Please (2)

Dear Chris,

I'm writing, again, to ask if you or any other member has knowledge of the makers of the 'Englaphone' gramophone. I have just purchased an 'Englaphone' table model and none of my sources in this neck of the wood have heard of this make.

It sports such unusual features as vertical louvres as opposed to the horizontal, a winding handle with no thread but a kind of cone shaped shank with two grooves cut in either side of the cone. The machine also has an unusual arm movement. Instead of pivoting in the middle section of the arm it sits in a sort of ball and socket joint whereby it moves from the base of the arm.

I am unable to tell you the makers name on the motor as I cannot remove the platter for investigation. All that is marked on the gramophone is the company label which simply reads "The ENGLAPHONE plays any record!" The only other written information is on the soundbox which is a Goldring Luxus of Britain.

I am led to believe that it was manufactured in the late 1920s.

I would be most grateful for any information on this make of gramophone.

Yours sincerely,

Colin Barnard, [REDACTED] Eastbourne, East Sussex BN223 8LT

## Help Please (3)

Dear Chris,

Here am I again with another request for information. In 1942 Richard Tauber appeared in a musical production called *Blossom Time*. The vocal score attributes the music as follows: "Music arranged and derived from Franz Schubert by G. H. Clutsam." *London Musical Shows on Record* states "Music and lyrics: G. H. Clutsam and Richard Tauber based on the music of Franz Schubert." The *1947-48 Parlophone Catalogue* has two entries for *Blossom Time* - one for the film which preceded the show, and the other for the show. In the latter entry the work is credited to "Schubert-Clutsam", but record RO 20504 attributes the two songs on that record to Tauber-Clutsam & Clutsam-Tauber. Australian Parlophone AR 247 which corresponds to RO 20256 containing two songs from the film attributes one item to Clutsam and the other to Tauber-Clutsam.

Can anyone please tell me the extent of Tauber's contribution to either lyrics or music?

Yours sincerely,

Barry Badham, [REDACTED] Pymble, NSW 2073, Australia



## Help Please (4)

Dear Chris,

I would be grateful if you would publish an appeal for assistance in *Hillandale News*, please?

Keith Chandler and myself are collecting information for a discography (not a label listing) of the Scottish and Irish material on Beltona 78s. We have amassed a great deal of information, not only on the records, but also on recording dates and locations and the artists themselves. We want the **fullest** possible information on every relevant issue, including composer credits, performance description, accompaniment, etc. If any reader feels that they can help could they either write to me for a list of those issues for which we need information, or better still send me a list of the catalogue numbers only for those issues for which they have information. Please help if you can, even if it is only the details of one record - that may be the missing link!

All the best,

Bill Dean-Myatt, [REDACTED]  
Four Oaks Estate, Sutton Coldfield B74 2ST

### Kodisk

Dear Chris,

We collectors usually have a variety of 'useless' objects connected with the hobby just because they form part of the history of the subject and are nice to look at. In my own case, things such as fibre needle cutters and sharpeners and record cleaning pads are purchased and never used. Even more useless is a small selection I have of metal 'home recording' discs, such as 'Ekco Radiocorder' and 'Kingston's Home Recorder' discs. I have never seen the machines associated with these and am never likely to. In any event, the discs are either already used or corroded beyond use.

I also have an example of the Kodisk home recording disc. This differs from the others in that it was intended for recording using an acoustic gramophone, no other equipment being required other than a cardboard megaphone. The Kodisk is described in *Hillandale News* No.120, June 1981 by Christopher Proudfoot. For those who do not have a copy of this, a recording was made using the megaphone placed inside the gramophone horn. The illustrations

on the record cover show only enclosed horn machines. I very much doubt if this was ever successful.

What brought the Kodisk to mind was a recent purchase from an antique fair. I had always assumed that the home recording disc was the sole product of this company which was known as British Kodisk Ltd. and was licensed by the Metal Disc Co. of New York. However, my find at the fair was a 6" single-sided shellac record of *Old King Cole* on the Kiddie Record label from British Kodisk Ltd. The record is by Mr Joe Brown and is numbered 1002. The impressed matrix number is also 1002 but the numbers have been stamped as mirror images. Yes, the zeros look the same! The reverse of the record features a very nice scene, in colour, of Old King Cole with pipe, bowl and fiddlers three!

The record is now hanging on the wall of my music room, artwork outwards. After all, better to look at than to play. I would however be interested to know if anyone has information on Kodisk, other than the metal discs. I would also be interested to know if anyone has enough information on home recording disc equipment to produce an article for *Hillandale News*.

Yours sincerely,

Tony Voysey, Dursley, Gloucestershire

### Corrigendum

Dear Chris,

May I point out what appears to be an error on p.344 of the last issue of *Hillandale News*. In the review of the wireless programme *Groovin'* reference is made to 1 guinea (£1.10). If I remember correctly 1 guinea equalled 21 shillings and the correct figure in brackets should be £1.05.

All regards,

Barry Raynaud, Wembley, Middlesex

{Mea culpa. You're quite correct Barry, I should have checked the figure. Ed.}

### Somewhere a Voice is Calling

Dear Chris,

Generally speaking, I am of the opinion that an author should accept the rough with the smooth, as found in a book review, and refrain from comment. However, there are some aspects of Stephen Marriott's review to which I would like to refer.



This was a commissioned work, aimed at a general readership, and intended very much for people with affectionate memories of 'the old songs'. Its comparatively small size meant that anecdotal and biographical information had to be kept to a minimum. For that reason too, I confined myself to record labels with which the kind of folk for whom I was writing were more likely to be familiar.

Faced with a choice between a chronological approach and division into categories, I chose the former because so many songs are either hard to categorise - where would *Duna* fit in? - or could go into more than one category. As regards the so-called 'sacred songs', I regard them as being more Victorian than Edwardian, though some did appear later, I agree.

As regards there being 'no sense of the form developing', apart from an elimination of Victorian excesses, such acute morbidity, to which I referred, little change occurred during the period about which I wrote. The ballad was a very static art form, and was thus vulnerable to attack by the syncopated products of Tin Pan Alley. Or, if you prefer, the fox-trot virtually put an end to the ballad as a money-spinner.

*The Immortal House* was corrected by me when the final proofs were sent back, but still got through. As I was unwell for a time, the Index was handled by Evergreen. I would have used 'Artists' rather than personnel, myself.

The origins of *On the Banks of Allan Water* are obscure, as is the date of first appearance. The lyricist may have been Matthew Gregory Lewis; composition was credited to 'Lady C. S.' but Charles Edward Horn (1786-1849) may have been responsible. If Horn did write the music, it could have been while he was singing and conducting in America, although Allan Water (and this adds to the confusion) is frequently described as 'Scots Traditional'. Has Mr Marriott more precise information about this lovely old song?

Finally, I have everything 'Laurence Hope' had published, and I hold to my own opinion of her poetry. Mr Marriott is quite entitled to disagree. Poetry, like music, is very much of personal preference.

Yours sincerely,  
Peter Cliffe, Hitchin, Hertfordshire.

## Sir Hugh Robertson

Dear Chris,

In the report on your talk *A Taste of Scotland* it is stated that Sir Hugh Robertson of the Glasgow Orpheus Choir "was feared by many of his singers and that he stipulated that the choir should break up after his death." Happily, neither of these statements is accurate.

It is a fact that Robertson was choir-master of the 120-strong Orpheus Choir from 1901-1951, and that he, many would claim, was the best British chorus-master of the twentieth century. His amateur choristers were ordinary working [people] whose names recurred in the choir lists year after year.

The Orpheus Choir Monday night rehearsals were famous; many (often distinguished) visitors sat at the back of the Greyfriars Hall enjoying what we would call a "master class" and learning a great deal about choral singing. After attendance at such a rehearsal Peter Pears, the tenor, wrote to Sir Hugh "...I wanted badly to have another lesson from you and the Choir. All the things I value most were so fully present in your singing..." During its lifetime the Orpheus Choir was 'news' and therefore much written about. With rehearsals often by well-known people one would expect visitors to note and comment upon anything unusual. During my researches I have neither read nor heard any suggestion that his choristers were fearful of Robertson.

Sir Hugh has been described as a "benevolent autocrat" but his choristers always spoke of "the boss" in admiration and with affection. Whilst any successful chorus-master has to be a disciplinarian, loyalty and enthusiasm are not fostered by fear! That the choir was a happy team is demonstrated by the existence of the Glasgow Orpheus Society (of former choristers) which survived until around 1991, forty years after the choir disbanded.

I remember, and press reports from June 1950 confirm, that members of the Orpheus Choir were unanimous in deciding that the choir should disband in the following year when the 77-year old Sir Hugh retired. Thus the Glasgow Orpheus Choir sang for the last time at a concert in the new Festival Hall, London, on 16<sup>th</sup> June 1951. Sir Hugh died in 1952.

With kind regards,  
Robert Rankine, Alloa, Clackmannanshire



## Phonofair '97 and more help please

Dear Chris,

I am at present restoring a Pathé Duplex Phonograph No.95 (priced at (£7 15s.), in the Pathé Catalogue of July 1903. It is also shown in the catalogue issued by the Society in 1991 for the Cirencester Exhibition. (It is fig.60), and if anyone has such a machine or parts or details relating to it which may be of use in this work I would be most grateful if they would contact me on 01229-825815.

I would like to say how disappointed I was to take a machine for display to Phonofair '97 at Northampton, to find that the "display table" had been sold as "trade table".

I was very kindly offered room on Richard Taylor's table, and drew a considerable amount of interest from those of the public as well as the society members who saw and heard it.

Please don't let this "Society Event" become just another antiques fair!

Yours phonographically,  
Miles Mallinson, Barrow-in-Furness, Cumbria

## Birthday Wishes and the Future

Dear Chris,

Just a very quick observation on *We also Have our Own Records*, Part 4, Issue 217.

Frank Andrews refers to a label under the name of "Birthday Wishes". Whilst both he and Jim Hayes are far more knowledgeable than I am, I wonder whether this is correct. I have an example of a record called "Birthday Greetings", which was produced presumably in the 1950s and is printed on the laminated second sheet of what appears to be a sentimental birthday card (only the sheet with the recording survives in my copy, the other having been torn off).

The card is white but under the grooved area is tinted sickly pink! As Frank says the record is therefore single-sided. My copy carries the number MC 105, and an unnamed baritone croons *God Bless You, and Many Happy Returns*.

I am enjoying Frank's series very much. To add to the debate on the future of the Society, well I am very much a record nut, as opposed to a machine enthusiast. Although I have a small number of gramophones and intend to buy more, they are very much secondary to my archive-building attempts; I am collating as

much information as I can on labels, matrices and the like and obviously articles relating to these are my particular favourites. I tend to skip over the meeting reports altogether.

Best wishes,  
Stephen Sutton, Northallerton, North Yorkshire

## Peter Dawson

Dear Chris,

For some years Russell Smith and I have been researching and documenting the career of Peter Dawson (1882-1961), Australia's most famous male singer.

Our book on Dawson is expected to be ready for the printer by the end of the year for publication in 1998.

In order to help to finalise the Dawson discography I would like to appeal to society members for information on his early cylinder recordings.

I am particularly seeking information on accompaniments for his two-minute wax cylinders on Edison Bell, Lambert, Pathé, White, Sterling, Clarion and Edison. I need to establish if the accompaniment is piano, small orchestra, large orchestra, with "effects", other voices, etc. I also wish to determine which cylinders have the title and performer announced. Where possible composer credits for each composition are required.

Any assistance from members will be greatly appreciated. Can I also flag a couple of other mysteries surrounding Dawson's first year of recording (1904).

In his 1951 autobiography *Fifty Years of Song* the author claims his first recording was *Navajo* (comp: Williams and Alstyne) recorded for Edison Bell in London, probably about June or July 1904. This was issued as by Leonard Dawson on Edison Bell 6398 and also as by Leonard Dawson on Lambert 5100 at about the same time, possibly from the same or on an adjoining recording session.

However, Edison Bell catalogues list 6383 (*Thy Beaming Eyes*) and 6384 (*To My First Love*) as by Peter Dawson, whilst the Lambert catalogue lists nine titles by Dawson prior to 5100. Whilst it is possible that *Navajo* is part of a batch of Dawson's initial recordings and not necessarily his first release (or recording?). Can any reader with supplements offer assistance to solve this puzzle?

I am also curious if Peter's first wife, Annie Mortimer Noble (stage name: Annette George) made any recordings. The surname of Mortimer turns up in a duet with Dawson (as Will Danby) in *Smile, Smile, Smile* on Edison Bell 20076 and I wonder who this is. It could be Maud Mortimer but if anyone has this cylinder I would be pleased if they could confirm details.

Another riddle to be resolved is Dawson's claim in his autobiography that he recorded *The Bandolero* for Edison Bell with Harry Bluff providing his notorious and colourful introduction. I have yet to trace any version of *The Bandolero* by Dawson on any brand of 2-minute wax cylinder. Does anyone know of the existence of such an announced version by Dawson?

Possibly the greatest mystery with Dawson is identifying all his pseudonyms, both on cylinder and disc. I suspect these false names were invented by the record companies (in most cases) rather than selected by the performer. The following aliases have been suggested as being Peter Dawson:

Mr C. Adams	Nicole
Robert Baxter	Zonophone
James Bell	Zonophone
Percy Dalton	Ariel
Will Danby	Twin/White/Sterling/ Edison Bell
Fred Davies	Zonophone
Leonard Dawson	Edison Bell/Lambert
Maurice Evans	Ariel
Victor Graham	G&T
Hector Grant	Zonophone/Pathé/ Victor/White/Edison
Charles Handy	HMV/Zonophone/ Ariel
Mr Miles	Zonophone
Llewelyn Morgan	HMV
James Osborne	Zonophone/Twin
Uncle Peter	HMV
David Peters	G&T
Sydney Reeves	HMV
William Stewart	Zonophone
Will Strong	HMV/Zonophone
Henry Tucker	G&T/Zonophone/ Twin
Arthur Walpole	Zonophone
George Welsh	Zonophone
Walter Wentworth	Zonophone/Twin

Some of Dawson's compositions were published under another assortment of noms de plume, such as:

Peter Allinson	J. P. McCall
Geoffrey Baxter	Allinson Miller
Evelyn Byrd	Gilbert Munday
Dick Denton	Charles Stander
Arnold Flint	Denton Toms
Hector Grant	Charles Webber

I would appreciate the help of collectors prepared to double-check their collections in order to confirm or refute the presence of Dawson using pseudonyms. Additions to the list would be welcomed.

Russell Smith and I intend to complete the Dawson manuscript by the end of the year for publication in 1998. This final appeal for assistance is designed to ensure that our book proves to be the definitive reference work on one of the recording industry's most acclaimed artists.

Yours sincerely,  
Peter Burgis, [REDACTED] Port Macquarie,  
N.S.W. 2444, Australia.

## FOR SALE:

**Columbia Graphophone Type BWT**  
Tabel Model, USA pre-Great War. Motor and case very original and in very good state, including decal and English/Spanish label inside case, turntable cloth original but faded, chrome so-so. Grand Symphonic sound-box not original. Nicely painted metal horn.

**'Nipper' 14"** (35cm) high including base, painted plaster, exemplary condition.

**STD turntable** with SME arm and 1/2-dozen assorted shells/cartridges.

**Goldring 88 turntable** with 2 arms and assorted shells/cartridges.

**Bang & Olufsen speakers** Beovox M70 (pair) and S45 (pair),

**Wharfedale Dovedale 3** (pair)

**Yamaha CA-1000 Amplifier,**

**Pioneer SG-9 Graphic Equalizer**

**Technics RS-B85 Cassette Deck**

**Aiwa CA-W30 Cassete Deck**

All the above property of late fastidious collector believed to be in excellent working order. Can be viewed North-West London. Box No.1 *Hillandale News*.



## REPORTS



### London Meeting, July 15th 1997

In the latest of his series of talks covering the old British record labels, Frank Andrews recounted the history of some of those starting with E and F, using slides and musical extracts.

The word Empire was freely used in such times by those who gave the title to the talk *We have our own Records*, and much of their music content was derived from continental masters from Beka, or British ones from Piccadilly or Guardsman.

The word English too appeared on several superior series, promoted by musical societies, while Esperanto was the label of the Esperanto Institute, founded in 1926. This is the first time that a song in Esperanto has been heard at a Society meeting. The recording was made and pressed by Crystallate, supervised by William Ditcham, but was for the converted rather than the curious.

More of a mystery were Films of Today records, publicising current releases, with extracts and a commentary. These were promised for November 1935 but no example has been reported.

Several companies in the record industry produced discs for ENSA during the 1939-45 war, Ensuring Necessary Sex Appeal for some of the forces, or Every Night Something Awful as others would have it, but which have an interest nowadays if they can be found. Most were intended for broadcasting systems.

As always, Frank presents a profoundly researched programme, reflecting many hours of gramophone study; this will be seen soon in more detail in these pages when their following makes will be featured:

Empire Recording Institute	Exo (three series)
Encore Records	Express and Star
Era Records	The Fairy
Elttenger Records (Post cards)	Famous Records
Excelda	Festival Records
Edison Bell	Festival Record Club
Excelphone	Flag Records
	f.m.p. (Fanfare
	Musical
	Publications)

### A London Correspondent

#### London Meeting, August 19th, 1997

The listener may be forgiven if sometimes the French and German song cycles lie heavily with themes that invite serious attention, such as love, jealousy, death or nature, but one likes to feel that our native approach is a lighter approach except when it comes to war and the Colours when we get roused.

In his programme called *English Song Cycles* Allan Palmer introduced us to several familiar and unfamiliar songs and placed them in their correct sets, with the help of recordings from acoustical to Long Playing days. This was an ideal presentation for a warm summer evening and we look forward to seeing him again on a future occasion. Our thanks particularly for the prepared sheets of words to compliment the song programme.

The following records were heard:

- Woodforde Finden:** *Four Indian Love Lyrics - Kashmiri Song* with Stewart Gardner (bar) **HMV E 180**  
**Easthope Martin:** *Songs of the Fair - Come to the Fair* with Charles Unwin (bar) **Edison Bell W 4662**  
**Herbert Oliver:** *Songs of Old London - Down Vauxhall Way* with Carrie Herwin (cont) **Columbia 2185**  
**Radclyffe-Hall:** *Songs of Three Counties - Blind Ploughman* with Feodor Chaliapin (bass) **HMV DA 993**

**Quilter:** *Five Shakespeare Songs - It was a Lover and his Lass* with Heddle Nash (ten) **HMV B 10265**

**Arne:** *Under the Greenwood Tree* (Shakespeare) with John Heddle Nash (bar) **HMV C 4256**

**Somervell:** *Maud - Birds in the High Hill Garden* with Keith Falkner (bar) **HMV B 9095**

**Somervell:** *A Shropshire Lad - Loveliest of Trees* with John McCormack (ten) **HMV DA 1776**

**Bantock:** *Songs of the Western isles - Song of the Seals* with Sydney MacEwan (ten) **PHILIPS GBL 5571**

**arr. Hughes:** *Irish Country Songs - A Ballynure Ballad* with Webster Booth (ten) **HMV B 9164**

**arr. Lawson:** *Songs of the North - Turn Ye to Me* with George Hamblin (ten) **Victor 74201**

Recitation by Sir Henry Newbolt of his own poetry, including *Play up, play up and play the Game*,

from a broadcast

**Ireland:** *Salt Water Ballads - Sea Fever* (words by Masfield) with Stuart Robertson (bar) **HMV B 2594**

**W. G. James:** *Six Australian Bush Songs - Bush Night Song and Stock Rider's Song* with Malcolm McEachern

**Vocalion D-02147/03433**

**Vaughan Williams:** *Songs of Travel - The Vagabond* (words by Stevenson) with Bryn Terfel **DGG 445946-2**

**Vaughan Williams:** *Songs of Travel - The Vagabond* (words by Stevenson) with Peter Dawson **HMV B 1698**

**Clutsam:** *Songs of the Turkish Hills - I Know of Two Bright Eyes* with Frank Titterton (ten) **Decca F 1915**

**Lehmann:** *In a Persian garden - Myself When Young* with Oscar Natzke (bass) **Parlophone E 11415**

**Landon Ronald:** *Summertime - Night, O Lovely Night* with Muriel Brunskill (cont) **Columbia 9199**

**Copland:** *Old American Songs - At the River and Ching-a-ring chaw* with William Warfield (bar)

**CBS BRG 72218**

**Holst:** *Four Songs for Voice and Violin* (1916) - *Jesu, Sweet, Now Will I Sing* with Dora Labette (sop) & W. H. Reed (vln) **Columbia L 1590**

**Elgar:** *Sea Pictures - Where Corals Lie* with Margaret Balfour (cont) **Vocalion D 02052**

**Vaughan Williams:** *Songs of Travel - The Roadside Fire* (words by Stevenson) with Victoria de los Angeles (sop)

**HMV ASD 3656**

*Bright is the Ring of Words* (No.8) with Peter Dawson (bar) **HMV B 1355**

## A London Correspondent

### Midlands Group, July 19th 1997

There was a healthy attendance for our two programmes on this evening. Mick James began with a programme entitled *Sport on 78* in which he played a dozen 78s all with a sporting theme.

Some of the items were descriptive of sports events, including one football and two cricket calypsos. Others were comedy items involving sporting themes such as *Sid Field Plays Golf* and *Donald the Dub* by Frank Crumit (also on golf).

It is surprising the number of sporting personalities who thought they could sing and managed to persuade record companies to try them out. In this category we heard boxer Tommy Farr sing *Remember Me* with occasional help from George Formby and his ukelele. Also Eric Chitty, a famous West Ham speedway rider gave us *If We Meet Again*, and boxer Jack Doyle sang *Mother Machree*.

A most entertaining mixture and this theme was a 'first' for our group evenings.

After a break John Stroud gave us *Comedy Capers*. His programme was mainly on 78s with a few items from LP. As usual John presented a mixture of comedy from various eras. We heard items like Robb Wilton in a non commercial extract from a BBC programme, Danny Kaye in *Tongue Twisters* and Max Wall in *What was that you said?* We also heard Gilbert Harding and Hermione Gingold in *Two to Tango* and Flanders and Swann in *Have some Madeira, M'Dear*.

The item the audience liked most was an excerpt from an item in which David Gunsen (an air traffic controller from Birmingham Airport) who had a natural gift for describing incidents that could go wrong in the air in a humorous way. This was another programme with plenty of variety.

The audience gave both presenters lengthy applause for their fine efforts.

**Geoff Howl**

### Northern Group, July 13th 1997

A most unusual picnic was held when 26 people met in the Great Hall at Whalley Abbey near Clitheroe for their Annual Portable Picnic. It was intended to hold the



event in the grounds of the Abbey, but due to inclement weather this was impossible so the portables were arranged round the large central table with folk seated in groups with their 'picnic' lunches. Unfortunately only one portable could be used at any one time due to the room acoustic and this limited the enjoyment.

The portables were manufactured in England, Switzerland, America, Japan and even Russia. There were portables by Ultraphone and Mikiphone.

It was nice to see so many members and friends, particularly Dougie Dowe, who had just arrived back from Australia.

Tea and Coffee (supplied by the Staff) brought our afternoon to a close, before a very wet drive home.

Our next meeting will be our AGM and will be held at Alston Hall, Longridge, Preston, on November 16th at 1.30pm, after which there will be a talk by Aubrey Kreike called *Olé - and it's not all Flamenco*.

New members are always welcome.

**Ann Mallinson**

## REGIONAL GROUP SECRETARIES

### **Clockwork Music Group**

H. P. Bailey,  
[REDACTED]

Tyne and Wear NE16 4ES

### **Midlands Group**

Phil Bennett,  
[REDACTED]

Whitmore Reans,  
Wolverhampton WV6 0JW

Tel: [REDACTED]

### **Northern Group**

Ann Mallinson,  
[REDACTED]

Barrow, Cumbria LA13 0HO

Tel: [REDACTED]

### **West of England Group**

Paul Morris,  
[REDACTED]

Exeter, Devon EX4 4HE

Tel: [REDACTED]

## FORTHCOMING MEETINGS IN LONDON

The London Meetings are held in the **Parlour Room** at the **Bloomsbury Central Baptist Church Halls**, 235 Shaftesbury Avenue, London WC2H 8EL at **7pm** on the **third Tuesday of the month**.

**October 21st**

*If Music Be The Food...* Colin Johnson will entertain us on a subject dear to us all.

**November 18th**

*What's in a Name ?* - Richard Nicholson will talk on artists who have recorded under pseudonyms.

**December 16th**

*Members' Night* - Traditional light-hearted seasonal programme.

About

# A HUNDRED YEARS

Thomas Alva Edison    *I am Dr. Brahms, Johannes Brahms*  
Emile Berliner recites    George Graham on *Drinking*

"They are Merry" at the Hotel Royale Budapest in 1899

"*The little Widow*" composed & conducted Carl Ziehrer

Enrico Caruso    Sousa's Band    Francesco Tamagno

Sarah Bernhardt recites a scene from *Phédre* of Racine

Prof. Dr. Josef Joachim plays Bach    Dame Nellie Melba

Question: When can you have your record and eat it?

Answer: When it's a STOLLWERCK CHOCOLATE Record.

Adelina Patti    Johnny Wakefield    Edouard Colonne

Count Leo TOLSTOY - Sir Charles Santley - Scott Joplin

The Royal Garrison Artillery bombards Lille    LENIN

The Funeral of the Unknown Warrior - recorded

electrically at Westminster Abbey, November 11th 1920

The Original Dixieland Jazz Band    Paul Robeson

Ernest Lough    Jascha Heifetz    Ignacy Jan Paderewski

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Sir Henry Wood    Winston Churchill    Arturo Toscanini

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